“THE SEASON OF CHANGE IS HERE”

Friends Of Democracy **General Election Manifesto 2026**

THE FRIENDS OF DEMOCRACY

KEEPING THE BEES IN CHECK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword ii

We Deserve A Safer Barbados 1

A Healthier Barbados For Everyone 4

No Roadblocks For Child Wellbeing 10

A Government Accountable To You 15

Full Support For Youth & Culture 19

Home Is Where The Heart Is 23

Planting Seeds For A Prosperous Nation 29

THE FRIENDS OF DEMOCRACY

Foreword

This is more than a policy platform: it is a testament of faith in our people, a declaration of purpose for our nation, and a covenant of hope for the generations yet to come.

We believe that Barbados has been entrusted with a sacred calling: to safeguard the dignity of its people, to nurture justice and fairness, and to build a society where every citizen—regardless of color, class, ethnicity, or religious persuasion—can walk in the fullness of their potential. This vision is one inspired by our unwavering belief in justice, equality, and national unity. It is carried forward with humility, courage, and resolve. We, the Friends of Democracy, stand before God and you as stewards of this responsibility. Our mission is clear: to develop, agitate, advocate for, and pursue programmes and policies that secure the continued development of our beloved country.

Our philosophy is firm: true power rests with the people, and a party must be the vehicle by which their collective voice drives economic, social, and political empowerment.

Our commitment is unwavering: to uplift, to include, to protect, and to unite.

This platform charts a course toward renewal and transformation—economic strategies that build resilience and opportunity, social programmes that dignify and uplift, and educational paths that prepare every child for tomorrow's world. It is rooted in good governance, constitutional rights, and the unshakable belief that democracy is strongest when it belongs to all.

We declare, without hesitation, that this vision is God-given—not for the advancement of a few, but for the blessing of the many. It calls us to protect our future together, to rise above division, and to ensure that progress is shared by every Barbadian.

This is our promise.

This is our covenant.

This is Our God-given Vision For You.

THE FRIENDS OF DEMOCRACY

Your Next Representatives

Karina Goodridge
Party Leader
Saint Philip West

Sherlan Davis
Saint Lucy

Steffanie Williams
Saint James North

Kerry Thomas
Saint James Central

Matthew Thorne
Saint James South

Bertunl Ricardo Harrison
Saint Michael North

Ricardo Williams
Saint Michael
North-West

Katrina Ramsay
Saint Michael
West-Central

Raymond Wiggins
Saint Michael Central

Dominique Yorke
Christ Church
East-Central

Anya Lorde
Saint Philip North

Omar Smith
Saint Philip South

WE DESERVE A SAFER BARBADOS

Friends Of Democracy **General Election Manifesto 2026**

A Community Of Safety And Healthy Development

We believe in prioritising targeted employment and skills development programs for at-risk youth in our communities. There should be an increase in vocational training for young people. There needs to be a wide-scale introduction of paid apprenticeship partnerships with private sector employers, providing participants with experience and reducing financial barriers.

We will advocate for and develop programmes which expand the access to mental health and substance abuse services, so those who are struggling know how to better recover, and families and communities are better equipped to offer them the loving support they need. Inter-agency collaboration is integral to all of these, linking our education, health, and housing needs, and delivering wraparound services to the vulnerable communities.

Enhanced community policing units should be instituted in the communities where they actively work to build trust and engage residents in crime prevention.

We recognise that criminal gangs are among the most dangerous threats to national security, social cohesion, and public safety in Barbados. To confront this crisis head-on, we will reintroduce and modernise comprehensive anti-gang legislation, aimed at disrupting, dismantling, and deterring criminal organisations operating across the island.

THE FRIENDS OF DEMOCRACY

To Restore, Or To Retribute: Each In Their Measure

Where the offence involves property theft, minor assault, or community disruption, initiatives such as repayment of stolen items, mediated apologies, and community service should increase as a measure to not only combat crime, but to provide tangible justice to victims. When used alongside retributive justice, restorative justice can balance the scales—severe crimes warrant firm penalties to uphold justice and deter future harm, while lesser offences benefit from rehabilitative approaches that prevent the cycle of incarceration.

Longer prison sentences can reinforce the seriousness of criminal conduct and signal a firm stance against lawlessness. Countries with strict sentencing regimes such as Singapore and the United States, have demonstrated that the certainty, severity, and in some instances, finality of punishment can reduce the incidence of violent crimes, when paired with proper and efficient enforcement.

We support the reintroduction of the death penalty. Capital punishment serves two primary functions: retributive justice and deterrence. By imposing the ultimate penalty for the most egregious crimes such as premeditated murder or acts of terrorism, we assert that Barbados values human life and will defend it without compromise.

Victims and their families deserve justice, and we as a government will have a duty to uphold that principle through lawful and proportionate consequences.

We bring a balanced approach

- Stricter legal safeguards, judicial oversight, avenues for appeal.
- National conversations including consultations with civil society, legal experts, and faith-based organisations
- The use of corporal punishment in cases where imprisonment alone may not suffice as a deterrent or a form of restorative justice.

A HEALTHIER BARBADOS FOR EVERYONE

Friends Of Democracy **Manifesto 2026**

A Tax-Free Food Industry

For too long, it has been difficult for us in Barbados to afford healthy foods and keep ourselves and our families growing healthily and happily. For too long, we have been victims of a tax system which makes good lifestyle and health practices a herculean task.

It is critical that we establish a bold, simplified, and more efficient tax reform strategy aimed at eliminating inefficiencies, reducing opportunities for tax evasion, and maximising government revenue collection. These inefficiencies lead to higher cost of living, more financial strain on households, and a quality of life which decreases due to people's inability to afford it.

Eating healthily should never be a burden, and so we must **abolish the 17.5% Value Added Tax (VAT) on all imported food items.** Under the current VAT System, private sector entities act as intermediaries in the collection of a 17.5% VAT on most goods and services. This model, while once effective, has now become inefficient and prone to abuse, tax leakage, and non-compliance.

We will instead, establish a 16% Point-of-Entry Goods Levy, which will bring about a **19% net saving to consumers.** With grocery food bills currently ranging between approximately 1,000 to 3,000 BBD per household, this means putting **$190 to $500+ back into the hands of our families.**

This new levy will eliminate the collection of the 17.5% Value Added Tax by third-party private sector entities and ensure that taxes on imported goods that now attract the VAT are collected by the government itself at the ports of entry.

This policy makes the costs of goods more transparent and predictable, helping working families manage their budgets. With the tax collected at the point of entry, we remove the layer of "pass-through inflation" and encourage competitive, honest pricing.

1 **Government Revenue Security**

By collecting the tax at the ports, the government gains direct control over a major source of public revenue, reducing the risks of underreporting delayed payments, and non-remittance by businesses.

2 **Reduced Administrative Burden**

Businesses will no longer be required to file complicated VAT returns. This streamlines operations and reduces red tape, especially for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

3 **Less Tax Evasion and Fraud**

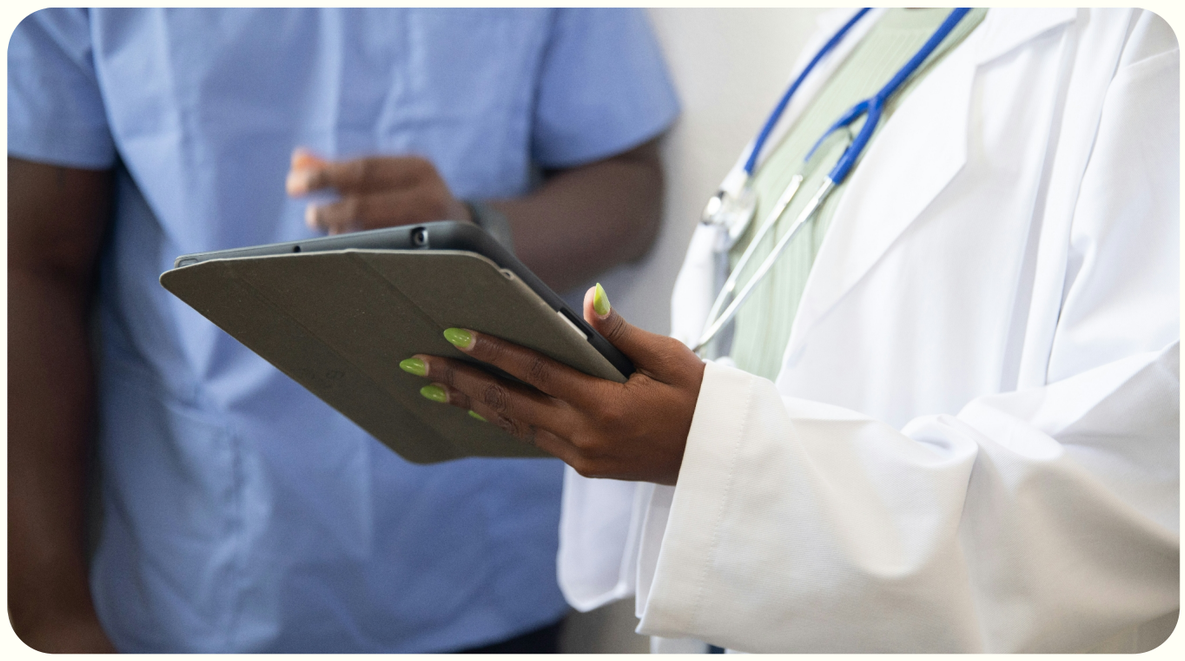
VAT collection by private entities often leads to under-invoicing, double accounting, and VAT fraud. Moving tax collection to the front end closes these loopholes.

4 **Consumer Transparency**

Consumers will face one consistent rate included in the price of imported goods, helping to demystify pricing structures and reduce the indirect burden of taxation.

THE FRIENDS OF DEMOCRACY

Healthcare Infrastructure Which Best Serves You



The 2023 Barbados Health Report, indicated persistent challenges, including overcrowding at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH), limited access to specialised services, and uneven distribution of healthcare resources across parishes.

These issues are compounded by an aging population and rising rates of chronic illnesses such as diabetes and hypertension, which place increasing strain on the system. Long-term capacity and access needs remain limited, especially in the eastern and southern parishes.

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH), once a symbol of national pride, has become a bottleneck of inefficiency, overcrowding, and mismanagement, reflecting years of neglect, poor planning, and lack of investment in the island's health infrastructure.

We propose that **a new stand-alone, centrally located, mini hospital, accident and emergency** building be constructed and fully outfitted with the necessary equipment and staffing to separate the care and attention of emergency cases from the compound of the QEH.

"A new hospital would make quality healthcare faster, more comfortable, and more accessible to Barbadians."

It would also position Barbados as a **regional leader in medical tourism,** particularly if the facility includes private wings and advanced diagnostic capabilities.

There is also a need for all polyclinics to be equipped with a range of services including the reintroduction of a comprehensive dental care service.

Establishing Parish Food Centres

In our efforts to further increase the accessibility and affordability of the goods you need for healthy living, we will **establish eleven (11) Parish Food Centres**—one in each parish—to put 50 of the most basic and nutritious food items in your pantry tax & duty free. This policy removes the middleman from the food distribution chain and eliminates the attached costs at every stage before it gets to the consuming public.

Food prices will be greatly reduced, and because it's not on all consumer items, its effect should not interfere with the other retailers' overall bottom line and profitability.

Food security must be of national importance

- An expansion in local crop production to reduce import dependency
- A strengthening of national food reserves and emergency food buffers
- The promotion of climate-resilient farming systems and drought-tolerant crops
- And increased support for greenhouse farming, shade-house technology, and controlled-environment agriculture.

Agriculture must be part of our communities

- More support for community gardens, urban farms, and school-based agriculture
- The creation of youth agricultural programs for career development
- The expansion of co-operative training, management, and marketing support
- And the introduction of tax incentives for registered agricultural co-operatives.

NO ROADBLOCKS FOR CHILD WELLBEING

Friends Of Democracy **General Election Manifesto 2026**

THE FRIENDS OF DEMOCRACY

Early Diagnostic Testing & Inclusive Learning Support

Education is the foundation of our lives as contributing members of this nation. Social experiences educate us on how to behave and respond to the behaviors of others. Religious and ethical teachings shape our morals, our value systems, and our personalities. Academic education introduces us to a vast pool of career and life paths for us to dive into. All that we are, is molded on the foundation of our childhood education.

But that molding is disrupted when we are exposed to learning environments which are unforgiving, unadaptive, and under-curated to our needs. According to the Situational Analysis of Barbados, this is the lived reality for too many of our students.

We send our beloved children into a system which takes too long to identify disabilities and learning deficiencies, has too few support systems, personnel, and tools, and is too unprepared for their eventual transition out of the educational system and into the workforce.

This reality has led us to conceptualize a threefold policy:

1. The implementation of a **rigorous and standardised screening** at the primary school level for learning and development disorders such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Dyslexia.

2. **A specialised unit of personnel** will be trained to support for our children, parents, and teachers as they address these learning differences.

3. An upgrade to the **Modern School Infrastructure Program** to ensure that inclusive classroom environments, adaptive technologies, and frameworks for accessibility are fundamental parts of all learning institutions.

Child Maintenance Facilitation & Support Scheme

“How long will we allow our children to be deprived of the support and resources they need due to the sluggishness of our judicial system?”

We intend to ensure that children receive consistent financial support from both parents without requiring mothers or fathers to undergo the adversarial and often public process of court litigation.

This provides a non-judicial mechanism for child maintenance enforcement and interim financial support through a revamped and modernised Child Maintenance Fund. Women with urgent, serious matters will still have the option of proceeding to court; they still have the option of seeking attorney advice. But while the court does its duty, the support a child needs should not be jeopardised.

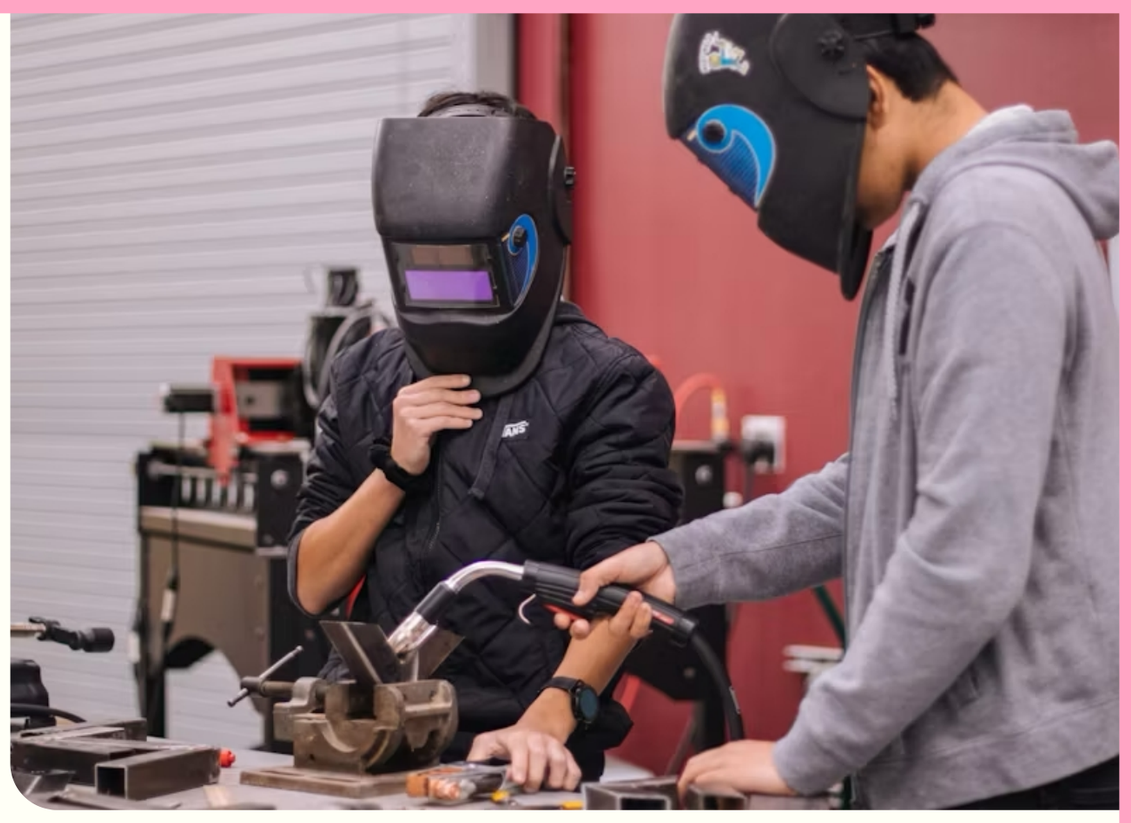
This is where our Out-of-Court Maintenance Agreement System (OCMAS) comes into play. We want to allow parents, especially fathers, to fulfil maintenance obligations without court intervention or public embarrassment, and to promote amicable co-parenting.

Caregivers will apply via a secure online government platform or at the welfare or community help centers. The other parent would be invited to enter a voluntary child support agreement. Agreements are digitally signed and registered with the government, ensuring enforceability without formal court proceedings. Payments are made via a centralized portal, ensuring transparency and traceability.

For each child, support to the sum of 75 BBD per week will be given—a figure which will be regularly reassessed and

updated to reflect inflation and cost of living. This support will be given for up to four months, with an option for renewal upon review. These payments are made from a revolving OCMAS fund, to be reimbursed when arrears are recovered from the non-paying parent. The recovery will be managed by the Office of the Attorney General in collaboration with the Child Maintenance Recovery Unit and Welfare Authority.

The implementation of this system helps us avoid court delays and backlog. It will reduce stigma and adversarial disputes, and encourages fathers' voluntary compliance and responsible parenting. We all seek to live in a Barbados in which the judicial and welfare systems are fair, timely, and modern, and part of that ensures that we treat our children in the same way. A thriving society in our 21st century age must never allow its young to suffer due to inefficiencies and conflicts within the judicial system. Even before arrears are accumulated on the end of the parents, we must ensure early intervention and support for our children.



Career-Ready Technical Education

Our world has grown into more than just academics, and we must develop more learning facilities and opportunities that help our young people, whether they choose an academic path, or a skill-based one.

We call for the restructuring of the Alma Parris School into a Technical Career Institute, dedicated to developing vocational and technical skills in young people who show strong aptitude in trades, craftsmanship, engineering, or technology at the secondary level. This new institute will provide them with preparatory certifications and a pathway to progress into the world of work where they can enter a direct mentorship program that escalates to full-time employment and/or entrepreneurship.

Embracing The Future: National Strategy On AI

We acknowledge the transformation potential of AI and the need for Barbados to be proactive, not reactive, in understanding and harnessing this technology.

1 **A national review and research agenda on AI**, including its application, ethical concerns, and socio-economic implications.

2 Identifying and **mentoring young minds** with aptitude in S.T.E.M to explore AI careers.

3 Positioning Barbados to be a **regional leader in tech innovation** by nurturing homegrown talent.

Through early intervention, vocational empowerment, and forward-looking technological policies, we can shape a future where all Barbadians, regardless of background or ability, have the tools to succeed.

A GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABLE TO YOU

Friends Of Democracy **Manifesto 2026**

THE FRIENDS OF DEMOCRACY

Equitable Repayment Practices

When it comes to a government and its people, accountability must go both ways. For too long, Barbadians, whether ordinary citizens, pensioners, small business owners, or contractors, have endured unreasonable delays in receiving payments owed by the Government of Barbados. Meanwhile, when citizens owe the government, penalties, interest, and enforcement actions are swiftly applied. This double standard must end!

We are advocating for interest to be imposed on government when it owes people. Under a Friends of Democracy administration, legislation would be introduced to ensure that interest is applied to any sum owed by the Government of Barbados to individuals, companies, or institutions, once that payment is delayed beyond an agreed contractual or statutory timeframe.

This policy would apply to delayed pension payments or gratuities to retirees and public servants, late payments to vendors, contractors, and service providers who have fulfilled government contracts and rebates or refunds owed by government agencies, such as tax returns or NIS reimbursements.

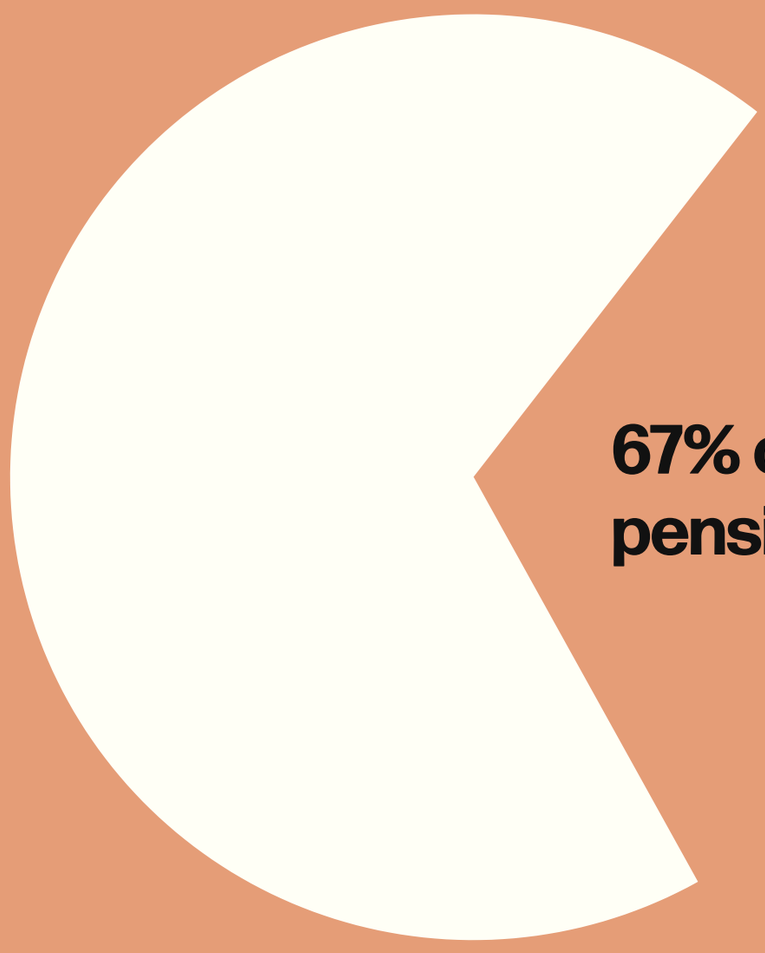
Expanding Our Energy Sector

We recognize that true energy independence and consumer empowerment cannot be achieved under a monopoly-controlled electricity grid. For too long, Barbados Light & Power (BL&P) has maintained exclusive control over power generation and distribution, resulting in high electricity prices for households and businesses, limited innovation in renewable energy technologies and slow transition to sustainable energy systems.

We will enact legislative and regulatory reforms that break the monopoly held by BL&P and creates a competitive and diversified energy market with multiple providers.

Abolition Of Taxes On Pensions

We must accept the fact that pensions are salaries deferred to the worthy recipients. With that in mind, we are of the opinion that after contributing to the tax system of the country for in some instances thirty-three and a third (33 1/3) years and more in some cases, the government or private sector employee has made his or her significant contribution to the consolidated fund and by extension to the upkeep, maintenance and governance of the country.



67% of your pension Tax-Free

As a golden handshake to those categories of workers, we propose to exempt sixty seven percent (67%) of all pensions received by these former workers from any taxes or government impositions.

Therefore, only 33% of the paid pensions will be taxable or attract any government impositions.

THE FRIENDS OF DEMOCRACY

Land Tax That Liberates You

We are committed to creating a tax regime that works for the many, not the few. We want a bold step toward a more just and economically secure Barbados, where no family has to fear eviction or financial ruin simply because they dared to own a home.

1 Protect vulnerable homeowners from losing property due to tax burdens.

2 Stimulate the housing market by making ownership more attractive and affordable.

3 Encourage land development and reduce vacancy or under-use of residential land.

4 Uphold tax justice by ensuring that commercial entities and wealthier landowners carry a fairer share of the national tax responsibility.

No Solid Waste Tax On Un-serviced Properties

The solid waste tax will only apply to the properties serviced by the existing sewage treatment plants or those households that will subsequently be attached to any new sewage treatment facility. It is unfair and unjust that households not using sewage treatment plants be charged or levied for a service they are not receiving.

A Road From Approval To Implementation

We call for the creation of a **Department of Policies and Programmes Implementation** with a director and requisite professional staff to oversee all implementation and operationalisation of new government policies and programs after approval by Cabinet, to the point where the mechanics of the policies are fully known and familiar to the respective departments or agencies who will eventually administer them.

FULL SUPPORT FOR YOUTH & CULTURE

Highlighting Our National Treasures

“Culture is not a mere luxury. It is a pillar of national development, identity, and economic opportunity.”

In support of our local artists, sculptors, and creatives, we will mandate that all government buildings and publicly-owned properties must procure and display no fewer than 20 pieces of locally produced art.

These pieces will include paintings, sculptures, textiles, installations, and mixed media works that reflect the history, spirit, and diversity of Barbadian culture.

Through this policy, sustained income opportunities for Barbados’ creative sector would be created through guaranteed public procurement. It also helps us to further celebrate and preserve Barbadian culture by making local artwork visible and accessible to citizens and visitors alike. National pride is promoted, and cultural education occurs every day through public display of artistic excellence in government spaces.

As we strive towards modernization in places like our schools, clinics, courts, ministries, airports, and other public infrastructure, infusing our art and culture keeps our aesthetic truly Bajan, through and through.

We also propose the establishment of a national public art collection that archives and elevates the creative contributions of Barbadian artists.

Developing Our Distinctive National Dress

Our culture is ever-evolving, and we must actively facilitate opportunities for our contribution towards it. We currently have national costumes, but no official national dress. We will usher in the development of a national dress that uniquely identifies Barbadians' cultural heritage.

This initiative will create the opportunity for a competition among our artistic creatives to conceptualize designs for the national dress, be it shirts, pants, head wear, dresses, blouses, or shoes.

Riding on these designs will be an aggressive manufacturing of these garments, creating opportunities for our seamstresses, dress and shirt makers, and tailors in Barbados.

THE FRIENDS OF DEMOCRACY

Elevating Sports From Primary School To Professional Careers

The Culture of Sports has to change from an extra curricular activity and placed in its rightful position as “Big Business”– that shift has already happened on the global stage. That’s why we intend to create the atmosphere that Sports be treated as such and therefore it has to start at the entry level at our schools.

Barbados must position sports as a legitimate career option, comparable to fields like medicine, law, or finance. This would involve: government support, private sector investment, dedicated sports infrastructure and specialist training for coaches and educators.

It is therefore necessary to create a School of Excellence, an environment to train and equip those students that excel in any sporting discipline to be adequately prepared for the world of professional sports.

We are committed to fostering the next generation of world-class sporting talent by **establishing a National Sports Academy by June 2030.** This facility would offer: High-level coaching and mentorship, Academic flexibility tailored to athlete development, Access to international competition and exposure, nutrition, physiotherapy, and psychological support. This would ensure that students who show potential are given the tools they need not just to compete, but to excel on the international stage, be it in athletics, cricket, football, swimming, or any other discipline.

By formalising sports as a viable career, Barbados can create new job opportunities in coaching, sports medicine, administration, and media.

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

Friends Of Democracy **Manifesto 2026**

THE FRIENDS OF DEMOCRACY

Making Home-Ownership Attainable Again

Barbados faces a growing housing crisis, particularly among low-income earners who struggle to access affordable, secure, and dignified living conditions. Although the Housing Credit Fund (HCF) was established to support households earning under 51,000 BBD annually, according to the Central Bank of Barbados, demand continues to outpace supply.

Most individuals do not earn enough to meet the requirements of financial institutions to qualify for a mortgage. Many families are forced into overcrowded or substandard housing, exacerbating social vulnerabilities such as domestic instability, poor health outcomes, and limited educational attainment for children.

Without targeted intervention, this crisis threatens to deepen inequality and hinder national development.

Our four-pronged solution for this crisis is such:

1. An aggressive genuine rent-to-own policy, where 100% mortgages will be granted to public officers and other private sector employees with incomes of between $2,500 and $5,000 monthly.

2. An agency will be re-mandated or created to superintend this policy, where 100% mortgages will be granted with reasonable market driven interest rates.

3. A mix of very low-costs quality houses, single stand-alone units, and terrace units with no frills, to allow the owners to finish the interior fittings, for example bedroom wardrobes and kitchen cabinets, thus reducing the initial building costs.

4. The implementation of reverse mortgages, particularly as it relates to those persons over the age of 60 years old.

Rent-To-Own

We are committed to breaking the cycle of generational renting and expanding homeownership for working-class and middle-income Barbadians. Our aggressive, genuine rent-to-own policy will make it possible for thousands of citizens to secure a home, many for the first time in their lives.

Under this policy, 100% mortgages will be granted to public officers and private sector employees earning 2,500-5,000 BBD monthly. These mortgages will be provided at reasonable, market-driven interest rates, with no deposit required, thus removing one of the largest barriers to entry for first-time buyers.

A dedicated housing authority or newly-mandated agency will be established to superintend and manage the program, ensuring transparency, efficiency, and accountability.

THE FRIENDS OF DEMOCRACY

Low Cost. Quality Housing!

- Very low-cost, **quality housing units**, built to last and designed for practical, comfortable living.
- A mix of single stand-alone homes and terraced units, located in strategically selected communities to support **access to jobs, transport, schools, and other essential services.**
- Homes will come with essential structural finishes only (roofing, walls, plumbing, and electrical wiring). Non-essential fittings, such as wardrobes, kitchen cabinets, and decorative finish, will be left to the new owner's discretion and budget, thereby **reducing construction costs and sale prices** while allowing homeowners to personalise their spaces over time.

This approach promotes dignity through ownership, empowers families, and gives young professionals and working-class citizens a genuine stake in the national economy. We will also integrate green energy standards into new housing developments to reduce long-term utility costs and promote environmental sustainability. Developers will be incentivised to build affordable units through tax breaks and fast-track approvals. We will also use land in high demand urban areas efficiently by constructing multi-story housing complexes on government-owned land to maximise space.

F.O.D. will offer financial support for repairs and upgrades to existing low-income homes, through home improvement grants. This could improve living standards and reduce long-term maintenance costs, ensuring the family homes pass successfully from generation to generation. This enhances generational stability.

We will empower citizens to make informed decisions and avoid predatory lending by facilitating workshops on budgeting, mortgage management, and tenant rights.

A Home Attainable For All Ages

A reverse mortgage is a financial arrangement where homeowners aged 60 and over can access part of the equity in their homes without having to sell or vacate the property. Instead of making monthly mortgage payments, the homeowner receives payments from a lender, and repayment is only required when the home is sold, or the owner passes away.

This policy is about preserving dignity in retirement, giving our seniors the freedom to access the wealth they built over a lifetime, and easing the financial burden on younger family members who may otherwise carry the full responsibility for elder care.

1. Strict regulatory oversight to ensure transparency, fairness, and protection against predatory lending.
2. Collaboration with financial institutions and credit unions to create safe, regulated reverse mortgage products that meet international best practices.
3. Public education campaigns to help seniors and their families understand the benefits and risks of reverse mortgages.
4. Provisions to ensure that homeowners can remain in their homes for life, as long as property taxes and basic maintenance are upheld.

"We are committed to keeping Bajan homes and families safe. Today, and forever more."

Mandatory House Replacement Insurance

We propose the implementation of **shared mandatory house replacement insurance on all houses built with the state's assistance**, (not including those for long-term rental or mortgage acquired ownership).

The rationale for the implementation of this policy is the absence of an efficient, humane, and viable solution to replace dwellings built with the state's assistance that have been lost to catastrophe, especially fire.

A reputable insurance company should be established with a policy to cover all government-assisted houses built by the state, **with premiums being shared by 80% paid by the government and 20% by the legitimate occupier of the dwelling.**

The occupier's portion of the premium will be levied by an upfront one-off payment of the equivalent of ten years premiums at the current market rate.

PLANTING SEEDS FOR A PROSPEROUS NATION

Friends Of Democracy **Manifesto 2026**

Small Enterprise Empowerment Department (S.E.E.D.)

In a reality where unemployment, underemployment, and lack of innovation in many sectors leaves young professionals disgruntled and unfulfilled, entrepreneurship still shines through as a glimmer of hope. An invitation for them to use their enthusiasm, knowledge, and network to build something of their own, and help improve our society.

A noble pursuit, and one which keeps our economy not only thriving through the activity it stimulates, but also growing in diversity of options and innovations. But a pursuit which for many Barbadians is near impossible, given the lack of sufficient funding and investment opportunities which will help get their idea off the ground. This need is increasing, and it has led us to formulate a plan of action to address it: we will implement a start-up seed fund in order to invest $1.5 million annually into over 100 entrepreneurs through SEED (Small Enterprise Empowerment Department) loans.

Applicants will receive a $15,000 loan in which there will be a built-in compulsory enrolment in the NIS Self Employment contribution fund, whose accumulated funds will act as a guarantee for the loan, with the government having the first claim on the matured benefits over time.

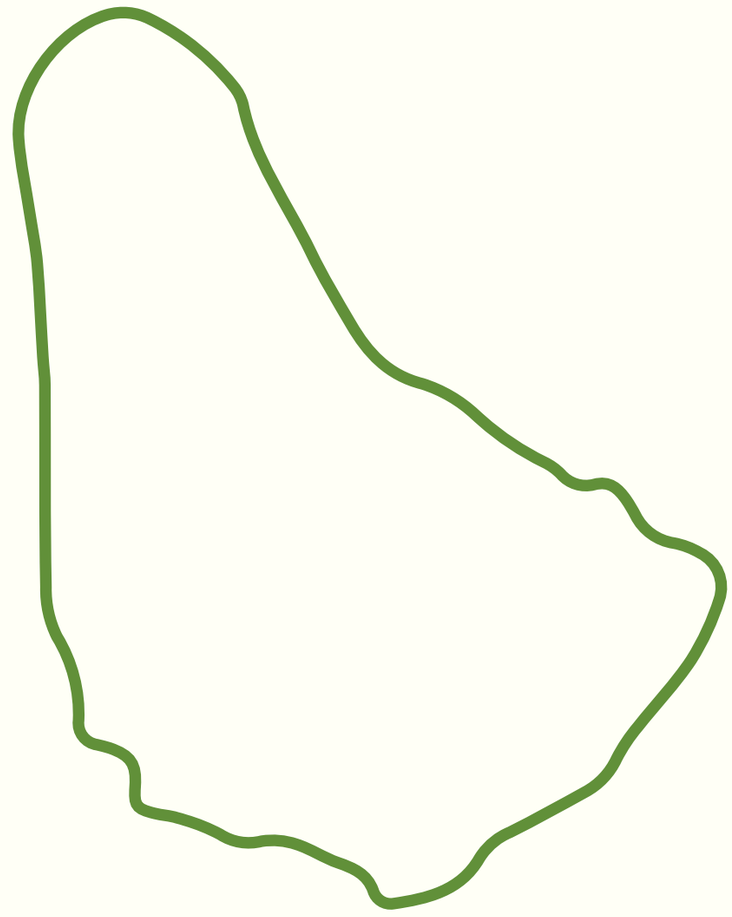
The NIS monthly or weekly payments from the loan recipients will form part of the monthly repayment to the government for the loan. The rationale is to afford adequate and appropriate seed funding while simultaneously instituting a built-in mechanism to guarantee the loan, while providing self-employment insurance coverage for the loan recipients.

These funds, paired with empowerment opportunities like business training, startup resources and tools, and a network of other like-minded individuals will make establishing small business enterprises much easier than it is for entrepreneurs today.

Coconut Water Vendor Villages

We propose the development of Coconut Water Vendor Villages. These government-sponsored villages will have all the amenities at specified spots on the highways, such as water-borne toilet facilities, and skips for disposal of coconut shells.

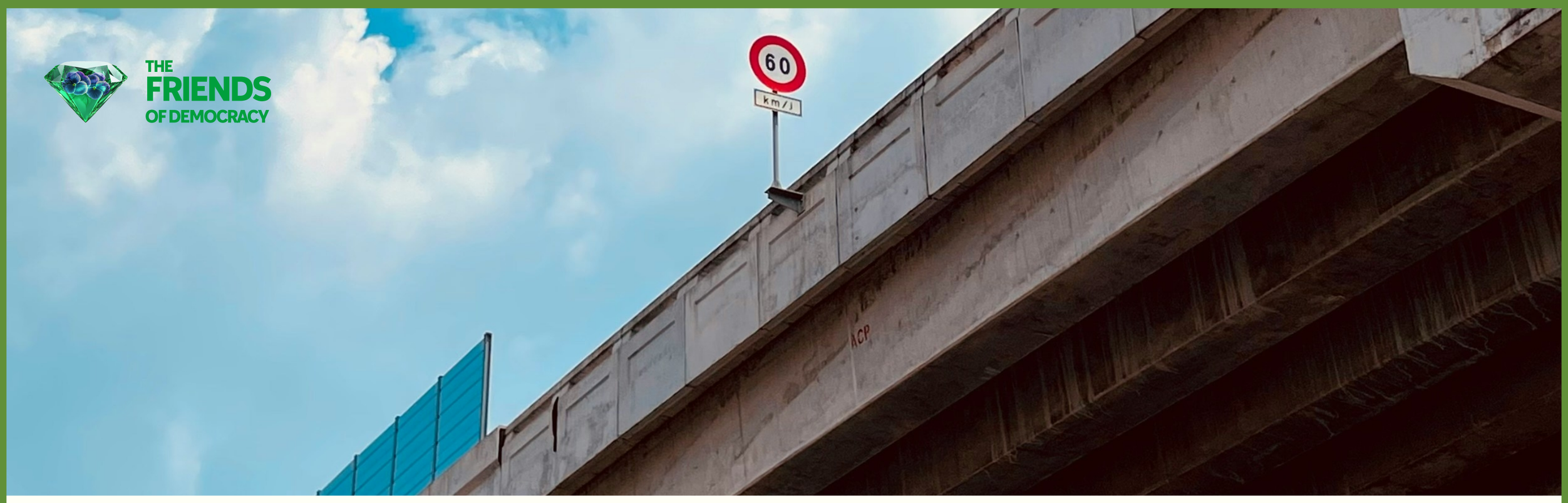
With increasingly harsh temperatures, it is important that we find ways to implement hydration into our public infrastructure. An FOD government would develop 6 Coconut Water Vendor Villages by December 2028.



Recreation Villages

What is life without enjoyment? We want to invite Bajans to unwind, by creating 6 Recreational Villages across the North-West, East & South Coasts of the island by July 2029.

These recreational villages, will serve as hot-spots for fun, food, culture, and relaxation. Oistins continues to provide a space not just for tourists to gather, but a place where locals can unwind, express themselves through dance and other nightlife activities, and have clean, Bajan fun. We want to take that success and expand it across our island.



While Barbados is a small island, the need for a flyover policy has arisen from several local realities:

- Increasing Traffic Congestion in Key Corridors-Areas such as the ABC Highway, Wildey, Warrens, and The Belle face daily congestion, particularly during peak hours. These choke-points cause productivity to slow down, fuel consumption to increase, and emergency vehicle response times to suffer.
- Limited Road Space for Expansion Barbados has limited land for road widening, especially in already-developed areas.

Safer, Smarter Roads

We are committed to providing a clear framework for the planning, construction, and maintenance of flyovers and grade-separated interchanges to ease traffic congestion, reduce travel time, enhance road safety, and support national economic development while minimizing environmental and social disruption.

Infusing flyovers into our public road network will increase capacity without using more horizontal land, solving bottlenecks vertically rather than laterally.

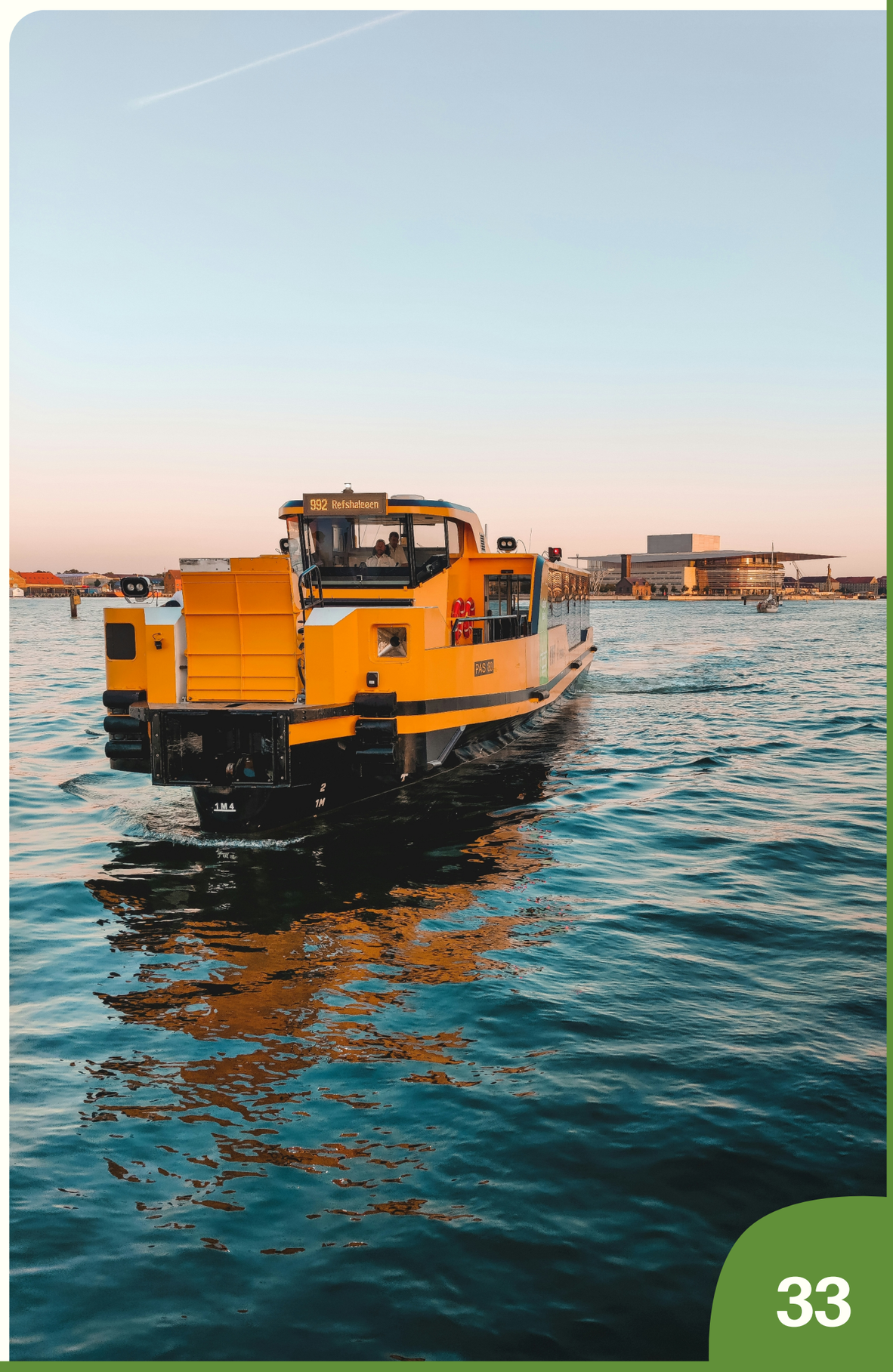
Supporting PSV Workers

We propose adding an award feature to the basic payments of all Public Service Vehicle (PSV) workers, to enhance their wages and further acknowledge that they are the backbone of the public transportation sector in Barbados.

This solution will help reduce the over enthusiastic spirit of competition, which encourages reckless and unlawful behaviour. By bringing all PSV workers onto the government payroll, with a negotiated and fixed weekly stipend to be added alongside the wages from their respective employers, we are engendering a feeling of care for them, thus creating a culture of second-tier entrepreneurship among the sector's drivers and conductors.

Operation of Sea Taxis

The Friends of Democracy proposes to create adequate parking facilities in our four(4) major towns to facilitate the efficient operation of a public/private sector near shore Sea Taxi operation to ferry commuters to and from those cities. The rationale for this initiative is to provide sea transportation at peak hours to cover the movement of commuters from Oistins in the south to Speightstown in the north, with the incorporated service to Bridgetown and Holetown, thus reducing significantly the heavy traffic congestion on our roadways.



KEEPING THE BEES IN CHECK

THE
FRIENDS
OF DEMOCRACY